



25 June 2026

Newsletter No 2 for 2026

Apologies, it's our first newsletter for a while, we will be aiming to produce these monthly for the remainder of this year.

On 12/13/14 June we held our AGM, Annual Conference, and Board meeting. Overall last year we made our first surplus for quite a few years, however, overall membership numbers stayed much the same. We had a successful conference on 13/14 June, and it was pleasing that we had representatives from all the regions in person and it was very useful to engage and get their feedback on several issues.

The Conference received excellent presentations from Julie Atkinson and Stephen Henry on the work of the Fair Play Committee and from Mereana Cullen on "how do we bring our youth to the tables".

Our Treasurer Sue Brown went through last year's financial results and gave an overview of the budget and key assumptions.

Kate Terry gave updates on the Marketing Plan and ran a workshop on "Connection and Community" which discussed the importance of this to running successful club. Other topics discussed were regional initiatives, the regional championship, tournament management issues, how we can improve communications, and progress with the testing of the new website.

Teaching and Learning

The Teaching and Learning Committee continues to work on a range of key initiatives.

- The updated Learners materials, Modules 1-12, will shortly be uploaded onto the current NZ Bridge website for teachers to download. The old materials will be retired.
- Supported Play started on 7th June (Sundays 4pm) with over 150 learners and newer players registered and more than twenty tables playing each week so far



- Improver and Intermediate online lessons have been very popular and will continue in Spring 2026. The committee are modernizing these lessons and will be restructuring them into clearer development pathways. They'll keep teachers updated as this work progresses

Regional Championships

The future of this long-standing event (formally the Interprovincials) was workshopped at the conference. Several points were considered including timing, funding, and the appropriateness of the existing categories. The board decided last year to cease funding player subsidies and does not intend to rescind this.

To seek input from across our club and player network, Kate Terry & John Skipper are drafting a survey which will be released shortly. Please do complete the survey even if you are not participating in the event.

Club Health check

At our AGM Hutt club lodged a discussion item around how best the bridge community can make bridge accessible to those with disabilities or mobility issues.

One of our key strategies is to make bridge accessible to all and to encourage participation. Kate Terry and Anne Barrowclough are going to initiate an audit of clubs to gauge what support could be provided and resources directed to help with funding options.

Tournament Management Issues

We have noted a decline in the management of some tournaments this year. Issues including complicated movements, scoring issues and delays with masterpoint uploads have compromised player enjoyment and led to an escalation in the number of complaints received. Earlier this week the Board issued a communication covering the issues of concern to regional committees and clubs along with a return form to be sent to the secretary after each tournament.

National Congress 2026

2026 is the 40th year of our National Congress. Entries are rolling in for National Congress in November; across the grades we have close to 100 teams already registered. This year we will be playing at two venues (only 350 metres apart). The main venue is the Palmy Function and Conference Centre, and we have also secured space at the Distinction Hotel We do have limited table space, so to avoid any disappointment please get your entries in early. If you book and pay by 30th September 2026, you to go in the draw to win your entry fee back. (4 chances to win). We have a few extra-curricular events happening, food trucks in the square,

our popular Quiz night with Dean Sole as the Quiz master, morning seminars with our celebrity guest speakers and the fancy dress day.

Appointment NZ Bridge Roll of Honour

At the recent AGM, the board proposed and the meeting endorsed the appointment of our recently retired board member Allan Morris to the NZ Bridge Roll of Honour. This acknowledgement (formerly life membership) is in recognition of Allan's involvement with NZ bridge over a long period including a 9-year term as board chair.



In receiving the award Allan commented "I have said on several occasions I was only the band leader, but the band leader of a wonderful group of talented and dedicated people. Recognition and credit extend to a large group of people who care deeply about the welfare and future of our game. The Board, management, and volunteers at all levels are equally deserving. It has been an honour to give something to the game I love."

World Youth Transnational Championships 2026

We have 5 players representing NZ in the WYTC in Hefei, China from 2-9 August. The players attending are Kevin Hu, Leon Meier, Alex Meyer, Zachary Yan and Lysandra Zheng, they will be joined for the teams by Michael Xu from USA. Sam Coutts will travel with the team and act as team manager for the event. The New Zealand players obtained considerable support from the New Zealand Bridge Foundation as well as the fundraiser held over Easter weekend.

International

A review has been undertaken of the International Committee, with updated terms of reference and changes to the Committee now made up of Kris Wooles (chair), Sam Coutts (board representative), Jan Alabaster & Pamela Livingston. We thank International Committee members Nigel Kearney and Jonathan Westoby, & Michael Cornell for the time and effort that they have put in over several years.

Alongside the International Committee, Chef de Mission and Coach, a selection panel has also been appointed consisting of Michael Cornell, Liz Fisher, Steph Jacob, Brad Johnston and Tim Schumacher.

The International Programme is starting to make strong progress with the coaching programme about to begin and the selectors announcing timelines for their decision-making process.

2026 Youth Weekend

The national Youth Weekend will be held in Christchurch from September 4-6, a chance for our young players to come together for a weekend of fun and learning. To date 35 players have registered to attend. The event is proudly supported by the New Zealand Bridge Foundation. We have extended the date to register and still have travel costs covered to the end of June.

Tournament Upgrades Approved for 2027

Earlier in the year we reviewed the masterpoint offerings for the open teams' events that are held as part of the 3-day regional congresses. Those events contested over 2 days with both qualifying and finals segments were on application able to be upgraded from 10A to 15A. The consolation event held alongside the team's final able to be upgraded from 3A to 5A. To date the following events have been upgraded with the change taking effect from 2027:

- Tauranga Congress
- Taranaki Congress
- Auckland Easter Congress
- Wellington Congress
- Hawkes Bay Congress
- Auckland Kings Birthday Congress
- Hamilton Labour Weekend Congress

Until next time.

Regards

Peter